

Quoting now, "Sandy Berger is about as qualified to be national security advisor as I am. He's a political operative who had virtually no foreign policy experience before he became Tony Lake's deputy."

Mr. Speaker, this story need not be glossed over. The first constructive step is that Sandy Berger must go, and we must release the Cox Select Committee Report.

STOP THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION FROM SENTENCING SOUTHWEST TO NEARLY 300 YEARS OF RADIOACTIVE DRINKING WATER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell you of the danger faced by 25 million people who get their water from the Colorado River because of radioactive waste leaching from an abandoned mine waste pile that is located only 750 feet away from the Colorado River.

This deadly waste pile, abandoned by the Atlas Corporation, sits in the Moab Valley of southeastern Utah. The Colorado River, flowing past this site just south, provides water for 7 percent of the United States population, including Las Vegas, Arizona and the southern California urban areas of Los Angeles and the city I represent, San Diego.

Legislation that the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and I have introduced, H.R. 393, would move this contaminated pile away from the Colorado River. Yesterday, the Project on Government Oversight, known as POGO, released a report recommending moving the pile as the most reliable way to save the growing population of Nevada, Arizona and California from having the highly contaminated waste leak into their water supply for the next 270 years.

I pledge to continue to fight to move this pile, lest my constituents and most of the Southwest be forced to live under a sentence of radioactivity and contaminants in their drinking water for nearly 3 centuries. This is an unacceptable sentence and would likely be a death sentence for many. I cannot sit idly by while polluters and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission inflict this on innocent people.

Recently, this commission which, has jurisdiction over cleaning up the site, issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement stating that Atlas' plan to cap the radioactive pile is, quote, environmentally acceptable.

Is it environmentally acceptable to cover 10.5 million tons of uranium mill wastes with rock and sand where the river can reach it during the spring runoff and cause a public health crisis? With the pile only 10 to 20 feet above the underground water aquifer, highly

concentrated ammonia will continue to seep into the ground water. If the runoff is bad for three endangered species of fish, as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledge, it surely is deadly, over time, for our children and our grandchildren.

This POGO report details a clear problem with the NRC's jurisdiction of this pile, and our bill, H.R. 393, addresses this by removing the responsibility for the pile to the Department of Energy, which has the technology and experience with cleaning up sites and protecting public health.

When the Department of Energy has been involved with contaminated sites along the Colorado River, it moved, and did not just cap, the sites with uranium concentration levels of less than 2 milligrams per liter.

The uranium concentration levels at Moab which I am talking about exceed 26 milligrams per liter, and yet the NRC pushes forward with its plan, forcing the Fish and Wildlife Service to sign off on the sand capping plan just because the NRC lacks the authority to move this pile.

As the report illustrates, it is past time to move this deadly pile, and to move jurisdiction for moving it to the Department of Energy, which will get this life-and-death job done.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for H.R. 393.

FOREIGN POLICY AMBIGUITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of great concern for the direction of our Nation's foreign policy, as President Clinton is on the brink of placing our Nation at war against the independent sovereign nation of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Speaker, let us not be mistaken. If the President issues orders to begin an air assault against Yugoslavia, the United States would, in effect, be at war with this country.

What will this war achieve? The President has yet to explain what our strategy is aimed to achieve. Will we bomb this country in order to force them to agree with a peace agreement that is not in effect?

What I fear is that this President has yet to think through the implications of an air attack and to think through a long-term strategy regarding this situation in Kosovo. Do Members of this body know what the administration plans to do if an air attack against Yugoslavia fails to force the Serbians to agree to a vague peace treaty?

Does the United States with NATO further escalate the bombing to attack fixed military targets around the Yugoslavian capital of Belgrade? Do we escalate our actions by placing ground troops in a hostile situation on the

ground in Kosovo? Do we try to seal off a largely landlocked nation? Do we try to use military troops in the non-NATO nations of Romania and Bulgaria to enforce an embargo?

Mr. President, what happens if the Serbs in Bosnia react against any bombing and start attacking U.S. and NATO forces there? What if Russia reacts in some form in defense of Yugoslavia?

Mr. President, what is the idea for success here? Not just an end game but how are we going to achieve success? What if an American flier is shot down and captured?

Mr. Speaker, we are headed down a very dangerous road without any type of compass to guide our policy. To me, the lack of comprehensive foreign policy by this administration has led us to this hazardous point.

The President must come before our Nation and tell our Nation three things: What is the long-term strategy of the United States in Yugoslavia? What is the end-game to achieve military success in this operation? What actions will the President take if military actions fail to achieve any stated goals or if military action devolves into the loss of American lives?

Mr. Speaker, until the President communicates this message to the American people, the mission's success in Yugoslavia will be limited. I call on the President to let the American people know today.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 11 a.m.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 44 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 11 a.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE) at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

During this moment of prayer we remember those people who have dedicated their lives to doing the good works that help others in our communities. In the privacy of our own hearts we recall the names of those gracious and charitable people who strengthen the bonds of our common humanity and enhance and share the benefits and the glories of our world. O gracious God, as You inspire all people to use their abilities in ways that alleviate any pain or hurt and who help to make noble the lives of the needy, so inspire each of us to be Your messengers of reconciliation and Your heralds of kindness and of love. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.